

Jeff, cattle buyer on demand

Like his father and grandfather before him, Jeff has been a cattle buyer for many years and has seen many changes in the cattle industry.

The day starts very early as he has to drive (sometimes hundreds of miles) to stockyards where he makes purchases of cattle on behalf of the company he works for. His is a highly responsible job as he might make purchases worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. He makes a visual appraisal on site as to the worth of the cattle and relies on his own experience and standing among the bidders to make a successful purchase.

As part of his job he is also the livestock manager for his company and is solely responsible for all livestock decisions. He sees to animal welfare and ensures a smooth supply of cattle from farmer to stockyard to abattoir. Disruptions to supply impact not only bidding at stockyards but also work schedules at abattoirs as both work to a tight schedule. Sometimes farmers sell directly to him enabling them to cut out costs they would otherwise incur at stockyards.

While he finds his job interesting and satisfying he finds it difficult to cope with being constantly on demand. This has come from the use of mobile phones. While the technology has certainly made his job more efficient, the downside is that he is constantly available to whoever needs him (often from 6.30am till after 8pm even on weekends). The workday proceeds at a pace he sometimes finds difficult to maintain.

He feels this unrelenting fast pace has just become the nature of the job.